



Arizona Department of Public Safety

- For Immediate Release -

Monday March 10, 2008

**Arizona Department of Public Safety, as part of IIMPACT, helps bust three “drop houses”
in three days, arrest human smugglers.**

On March 6, 2008, a Phoenix Police Patrol Unit responded to a shooting at 7th Avenue and Broadway. While searching the area for suspects and victims, officers located 38 undocumented aliens (UDAs) in two separate single-story apartments. Personnel from the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) assigned to the Illegal Immigration Prevention and Apprehension Co-op Team, better known as IIMPACT, responded to help further investigate the situation. IIMPACT includes Phoenix Police, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Arizona Financial Crimes Task Force. The ensuing investigation resulted in the arrests of two men who were charged with conspiracy to commit human smuggling. One man claimed to have been held at that location for the past 17 days and beaten while smugglers made ransom demands to his relatives in Mexico. Most were waiting to be transported to another location. ICE agents arrived on scene and took custody of 36 UDAs.

On March 7, 2008, a Phoenix police received a request for a check welfare at 837 N. 13th Av. Officers found approximately 38 individuals that were housed in two of the three bedrooms. IIMPACT detectives responded to the scene and conducted an investigation. Six individuals identified as “coyotes” suspects were questioned as to the level and extent of their involvement in the criminal enterprise of human smuggling. All of the 38 undocumented aliens were turned over to ICE agents.

On March 8, 2008, Phoenix police responded to a “shots fired” call at 5911 W. Albeniz. Officers found seven people, one of which sustained a gunshot wound. IIMPACT detectives responded and determined that seven undocumented immigrants paid their smuggling fees and arrived at that location earlier that morning. Once at the house, one of four “coyotes” began to threaten the group and struck one immigrant several times with a baseball bat before leaving the room. One immigrant was shot by a coyote after he tried removing the plywood covering in the bedroom window. The four suspects left the area and remain at large.

Press Inquiries:

PO BOX 6638 | Phoenix, AZ 85005-6638 | www.azdps.gov | pio@azdps.gov